Home Run Haggerty

His Troubles in Teaching the Boola University Nine

By George William Daley

"THERE'S an occupation that all the crack ball players of today seem to hanker after, and that's the business of coaching college nines in the springtime. A fellow gets into one of the big leagues, makes a reputation as a winning pitcher or a heavy hitter, and straightway he's engaged by some faculty athletic committee to come around and give lessons to the young fellows who are trying to get on the college nine. Then he dresses up in his glad duds, puts on a face like he was a heavy thinker, and spends his afternoons for a month or so criticising the boys as they skip

"Give us an illustration of what you mean," says the professor. "We will take it under advisement."

around in the practice cage or on the grass when the frost gets out of the ground.

"It's awful easy to criticise. It's a good ten to one shot that the professional with the big record couldn't take his coat off and do any better than the guys he's knockin', for he's probably got fat as mud through the winter. But all he's got to do is to put on a black scowl at a muff, or throw a Fred Clarke sneer at a fumble, and get off a couple of stories about heady plays he made last season in a tight game in St. Louis, and he gets away with it. The faculty athletic committee pats him on the back, and gives him a cash bonus and a $40 suit of clothes when he leaves. The nine he's been coaching jumps in and plays like boys in the lots for three or four games, till they find out just what real, natural talent they've got, and then they do well enough.

"I had always frowned on this coaching business, but late one winter, the last day of February I think, I received a telegram saying that Boola university must have me to coach their nine and to come at once. So I packed up and went.

"I got a great reception when I arrived. They all knew me by reputation, and there was a band and a glee club at the station, and the faculty athletic committee, and the faculty athletic advisory committee, and the faculty eligibility committee, and the faculty committee on the revising of the schedule, and the graduate committee on baseball, and the graduate committee on relations with other colleges, and the students' council on baseball, and the college trainer, four assistants, six rubbers and a mascot, the student baseball manager, a graduate advisor to the manager, four assistant managers, some twenty young fellows said to be the cream of the college's baseball talent, and the captain. He was a short, thick-set little fellow, with glasses and a golf cap, and his importance seemed to weigh on him, for he was round shouldered from it. They gave me a grand blow-out that night, winding up with dinner and speeches, and the next afternoon I went round to the cage to begin work. There was still snow on the ground, so out of doors was not in the question.

"The cage was set up in a big glass-enclosed room. It was about sixty feet long by twenty wide, and there was tanbark on the floor, and a couple of young men in there warming up with a ball. I had my ball clothes on, and I was teaching them how to pick a ball up and snap it underhand without any raising up or stepping back when the chairman of the athletic committee

"'Ah, Haggerty,' said he, 'hard at it, eh? Glad to see you at such practical work. The theories of some of the would-be baseball advisers in this institution disgusts me. I like to see good, practical, all-around work.' He rubbed his hands, and then got me up in a corner. He was a Greek and Latin professor, I heard said, and he was well equipped for his place as head of an advisory athletic committee, for he had seen eight full games of amateur baseball, three innings of a professional game, and two track meets.

"'Haggerty,' he went on in a confidential manner, 'there will be a number of my confreres who will try to burden you with advice as to the proper course to be followed in training this team. In other years I have followed their lead blindly, but this year I have determined to cut loose. We must win at all hazards this year. Young men are shunning the doors of our beloved university in their search for higher education because our nine has been a loser. You are the man to pull us out of the mire. Now to win we are to devise ways and means of getting our men to first base safely. That is the great desideratum.'

"I said nothing, but the old thought came to me that it's getting to the home plate that counts.

"'Now I've got a splendid idea that I want you to put into effect,' said he. 'It's something that I think has never occurred to those interested in the great national game. I want you to teach our boys so that they will always get first base on four balls.'

"I was going to say something, but he stopped me.

"'I knew you would agree with me,' said he, brightening up, and a look of enthusiasm kindling in his face. 'It's really quite the greatest idea ever thought of in baseball. Don't you see that if you get all the men to first on balls you can't lose? There's no risk; they can't put you out. Let me practically demonstrate it. A man gets up and waits for four balls. He gets first. The second man gets up and gets four more. The man who had been up first goes to second and the second man goes to first. A third man gets up. He gets four, too. The first batter goes to third, the second batter goes to second and the third batter goes to first. Then another man comes up. He gets four balls, and the first batter comes home with the first run. The second batter goes to third, the third batter goes to second and the fourth batter goes to first. There you are. A run in, no risk taken whatever, the bases still full and the fifth man at the bat. That's the real science of the game. I think you see through the idea, Haggerty, and I want you to act on it. It's really brilliant. I take great credit to myself for thinking it out.

"'Here comes Campleigh,' said he. He's the graduate adviser to the manager. He thinks he knows something of baseball because he played when in college, but his schemes are visionary. Don't listen to him. Don't lose sight of my idea. I'll be back shortly to see you demonstrate it.'

"He went out, leaving me sort of dazed, and the fellow he said was Campleigh galloped up.

"'Hello, Haggerty,' said he, givin' me a hearty handshake. 'Listening to that old gasbag's theories, eh? Sorry I didn't get here sooner. He's absolutely the worst theorist in baseball I ever saw. Now, we've got a likely bunch here. They can field a bit, bat fairly well, and they're all good runners. For that reason I want you to teach the value of the bunt. That's the scientific touch that's winning games just now—the bunt hit.'

"I concluded that I had kept silent long enough.

"'The bunt hit,' said I, 'is an abject confession on the part of the batter that he thinks the fence is too far away. It puts him in the power of the pitcher at once.'

"'No, no! No, no! You don't catch the idea. The men must bunt. They absolutely must. It's the thing that's going to beat these rivals of ours, for they're not good at it. Now I want you to put this idea through. Teach them to bunt on any and all occasions. Make them dump the ball on the third base line and tear for first. It's the greatest play ever invented. I'll be back in a minute. In the meantime, here's the chairman of the graduate committee on baseball. He's another theorist. Don't listen to him. I'm the only practical ball

"I Turned Around to the Three Advisers. They Were Speechless."

player in the bunch, and if you follow my advice things'll go swimmingly.'

"He passed along and up came the graduate baseball committee chairman. He had blue goggles and an automobile cap, and he buttonholed me just like the others.

"'Haggerty, said he, 'I've noticed the look of pain that has pervaded your features as you listened to that has-been, and I thought I'd butt in and talk some real ball to you. That Campleigh thinks because he played on a Boola nine 'steen years ago that he's it. You know yourself that they didn't know baseball then. His ideas are obsolete. He's out of date, and what new ideas he does get are just theories. Now I want to impress on you for this year's team the necessity of a bunch of scientific hitters. Teach team play. Don't let each man get up with the idea that he's the sole hitter on the face of the earth. Let him sacrifice a comrade along, and in that way only can victory be secured. That's sound baseball. You can't deny it. You must give the boys a lesson today in self-abnegation.'

"'Good gosh!' says I. 'I never heard of that play. Bases on balls, bunts, sacrifices; all them I know. But that last I'll give up.'

"He smiled nicely and said I was a joker, and to this day I don't know whether it was a throw, or a slide, or a trick with the bat he meant.

"Just then the professor with the bases on balls bug eame back, and with him Campleigh, and the three surrounded me.

"'Now, Haggerty,' says the professor, 'We'll start on the base on balls principle.'

"'Come, Haggerty,' says Campleigh, snapping his finger. 'Give us an example of the bunt hit for the boys.'

"'Don't bother with that foolishness,' broke in the graduates' committee chairman. 'That'll all come later. What we need now most of all, is a timely chapter on sacrifice hitting.'

"'Now, look here,' says I, kind o' brindling up at all that advice they were throwing at me. 'Do I run this must have something beside that. You've got to hit the ball. Hit it out.'

"'How's that done?' says the professor.

"'Unscientific!' grunted Campleigh.

"'Entirely due to luck,' says the team while I'm here, or don't I? Do they do as I say, or don't they? Am I goin' to teach 'em how to play ball in my own way, or must I stand a lot of advice on things that's no ways important? What is it?'

"'Oh, you must follow my advice,' says the professor.

"'Listen to what I say,' says Campleigh, savagely. 'Teach 'em bunts or your joo—'

"'But I must be obeyed in this sacrifice business,' broke in the graduate committeeman. 'We're paying for this coach.'

"'You're not!' snapped the professor.

"'What I say must be heeded,'' busted out Campleigh.

"'It's all off, then,' says I. 'I'm goin' home. I've got some ideas of my own to put in force, and if I can't I might as well quit.'

"'What's your idea?' says the professor.

"'It'd take too long to tell it all,' says I. 'Especially as regards fielding. At the bat the theories of you three are all wrong. The combination of waiting for bases on balls, bunting and sacrificing is all right, but you third man.

"'Give us an illustration of what you mean,' says the professor. 'We'll take it under advisement.'

"'Advise nothin',' said I. It's the first principle of the game—nail the ball on the seam. Give me a bat,' says I, 'and I'll show you.'

"Now I'd clean forgot I was in a cage in my indignation at the muttonheadedness of that trio. I grabbed a bat and stepped up and called to a young man who was throwin' incurves to a catcher to throw me one.

"'Good and hard now,' says I. 'Try to strike me out.'

"The young fellow smiled nicely and seemed so gentlemanly that I thought it a shame to blast his ambition right there. But I had a principle to show.

"'Now, watch,' says I. 'This is what I'd teach these boys if I were to stay.'

"The young man sent up a good fast curve, and I swung heavy. I caught the ball on the end of the bat. It lined out to the far end of the cage like a streak, struck plumb in the corner, and the next instant there was a cracklin' sound. There was a flash of wire over our heads, a crash of glass, a few smothered shouts, and there we were standing in the gymnasium, the whole glass side tore out of it, and the cage, with the ball in the corner, was sailing out over the campus and going like the wind. I must have put a lot o' strength into it to do it, but I was mad clean through.

"I turned around to the three advisers. They were speechless.

"'There,' says I, throwing down the bat. 'That's my idea of baseball—hit it hard. There's no need of fooling with bunts and bases on balls and sacrifices and all that scientific truck when a good hard smash will bring in a run. No use making hard work out of easy work.'

"With that I turned on my heel and got out. I hope the lesson did some good but, but I'm afraid those boys at Boola had to swallow all that fool stuff they tried on me. I never went back to find out."

Leo L. Loeb's Lacerations

"Paul Revere of Colorado" Is Cut Into Small Slices and Lives to Tell of It—Modest Young Westerner Expects to be Split Down Back

(New Orleans Picayune.)

Leo L. Loeb, known far and wide as the "Paul Revere of Colorado," performer of one of the most daring, risky and heroic feats the world has known of late years, stayed last night at the Denechaud hotel. This young man two years ago saved 2,000 people from drowning in a cloudburst by riding seventeen miles in one hour and fifteen minutes, although he was paralyzed in leg and arm. He raced with death along a perilous road down Ute Pass canyon, falling off his horse down a precipice 103 feet high, landing unhurt, crawling up the side of the canyon again and, regaining his horse, riding wildly on through a storm of hailstones, each weighing nine ounces, that slew many cattle that night, finally reaching Manitou, a summer resort at the foot of Pike's Peak, just in time to warn them of the flood and to snatch from death 2,000 lives.

All the world rang with this exploit when it happened, which was on Aug. 5, 1902. The name of the "Paul Revere of Colorado" was bestowed upon him instantly by a poetic press, and the name clung. Wherever Loeb has gone his exploit preceded him.

Loeb's story of his exploit is simple in the extreme.

Saw Danger Coming.

"I was working at Woodland Park, Colo.," he said, "as a mineralogist and guide for the state and the government, and was doing a little cowpunching and horse-breaking for myself. I saw the cloudburst coming, and I kenw, if somebody didn't warn Manitou, the town would be wiped out of existence. So I grabbed a horse and put out. I just kept ahead of the storm and I rode seventeen miles down Ute Pass canyon in one hour and fifteen minutes. I fell down the precipice, and God knows how it came I was not killed. That did not stop me, and I regained my horse and went on."

"Was your paralysis the result of the fall?" was asked.

"Oh, no. I have had that for twenty-one years, ever since I was a boy 4 years old, when I had an attack of spinal meningitis. An operation was performed on my leg by Dr. Lorenz's assistant, Dr. Frederick Mueller, after Lorenz's method, on Nov. 19 last. He took forty-two cuts on my leg and 186 stitches, broke my hip joint four times, stretched my leg three inches, put a 100-pound weight on my foot, a twenty-nine-pound weight on my spine and wrapped 265 yards of plaster of paris bandages around my leg and waist. I remained for two hours and forty-two minutes under the influence of ether. I stayed in the cast seven months and just took it off last Friday for the first time. My leg and my back are so weak that I can hardly hold myself up. The operation was performed in St. Luke's hospital, Chicago. Just before the operation Lorenz lectured on my case before 500 doctors.

A Terrible Ordeal.

"Still I am not through with operations. I am going to Mobile tomorrow and either there or at Montgomery another operation will be performed on my arm for paralysis. They will slit my arm from wrist to shoulder, expose the bone, scrape it, slit and scrape the tendons and sinews, replace the bone and sew it up again; split me down the back, scrape the bones and slit the tendons and sinews and sew my back up again."

"Do you enjoy the prospect?" he was asked.

"Indeed I do," he replied earnestly. "I believe it will help me to use my arm again. I am glad it is so near."

"But how did you do any cowpunching and ride horseback so much if your arm and leg were paralyzed?"

Loeb shrugged his shoulder. "I did it," he said, "and, not to be overmodest, I did it rather well."

"How did the Manitou people treat you?" was asked.

Loeb's face hardened and he was silent for a moment. "I'll tell you," he said. "Not one word of thanks; not one expression of gratitude did I ever get from those people. The name of 'Paul Revere' was all I got out of the job. Not that I'd take anything now if they offered it. I would not take a thousand dollars now, if they offered it on a golden platter. But, nevertheless, I'd do the same thing over again cheerfully.

"I have been appointed on the secret service by President Roosevelt," he continued, a moment later. "Just as soon as my arms gets well I am going to Washington to get instructions.

"There is one thing that might interest your city," he concluded. "I found out afterwards that there were more tourists from New Orleans in Manitou that day than from any other city of its size in the country."

His Recording Angel.

(Town Topics.)

"Who was that stunning blond you spoke to?"

"That's my recording angel."

"Come again?"

"My typewriter."